

VIDEO AGE

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INTERNATIONAL

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Review

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NATPE To Energize Budapest's TV Market

By SARA ALESSI

NATPE's board finally appointed Rod Perth president and CEO of the venerable U.S. TV market organizer last month (see World section), after conducting a search to replace outgoing CEO Rick Feldman that lasted a month longer than anticipated.

The announcement couldn't have been timelier, with NATPE Budapest now upon us. (When NATPE acquired full control of DISCOP East in June 2011 the market was renamed NATPE Budapest). Now the million-dollar question is: Will changes at the NATPE organization — with its new CEO and a new market to run — impact the event in any way? *VideoAge* checked in with NATPE and exhibitors alike to find out.

Most NATPE Budapest exhibitors were enthusiastic about their futures work with

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Rod Perth, NATPE's new CEO

When Content Is UbiQuitous

By LUCY COHEN BLATTER

Television viewers worldwide have made it clear that they want to access programming across myriad digital devices. But until now there has never been an international market dedicated solely to these new forms of entertainment deliveries.

Enter UbiQ, the first international Digital Entertainment Showcase, taking place June 18-19 in Paris, France.

The event, which will be held in the city's landmark Palais Brongniart (site of the former stock exchange) will "spotlight the best of digital entertainment — content creation, business case studies and winning strategies to engage with audiences and maximize ROI across all digital platforms — Internet, mobile, IPTV, connected TV, tablets and social media," according to a release.

"Anytime, Anywhere, Any Device (ATAWAD) now fully defines consumer expectations as well as media and advertiser obligations," said Gwénaël Flatres, CEO of UbiQ Events, and former

(Continued on Page 18)

In September, Italians Keep Int'l Film-TV Execs Captive

Venice Film Fest, Prix Italia, Roma Fiction Fest

September is becoming an important month for the Italian entertainment sector thanks to a number of film and TV trade events.

The multimedia slate of bazaars starts in the Northeast with the 69th annual Venice Film Festival, an 11-day event that ends Sept. 8. The film festival is followed by the 6th annual Prix Italia television festival, which takes place in the northwest city of Turin, Sept. 16-21. The "Prix" will precede another event, the

Roma Fiction Fest, which will be held in the central part of Italy from September 30 to October 5.

One could even call this trifecta of

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Biarritz Makes TV Biz Ritzy For French TV

The 18th annual iteration of Le Rendez-Vous, the French programming event sponsored by the Paris-based TV France International (TVFI) association, will return to Biarritz, France September 9-13 at the Espace Bellevue Convention Center, the same location as last year.

(Continued on Page 16)

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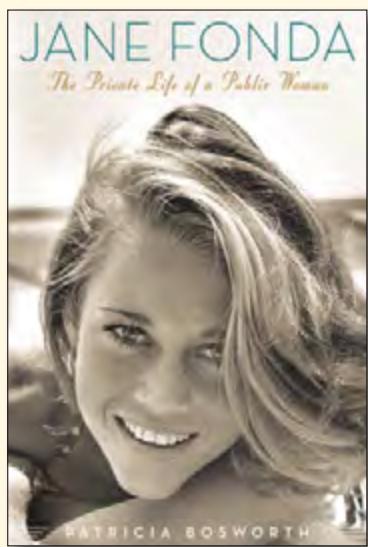


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MSOs Team Up for Wi-Fi

At the National Cable and Telecommunications Association Convention (NATC), which was held last month in Boston, several major U.S. cable TV firms, including Comcast Corp., Time Warner Cable, Cablevision and

Cox, announced they're joining forces on a Wi-Fi initiative. This venture would allow the cable companies' respective subscribers to access Wi-Fi in "public hot spots," even if they are in an area that is not served by their local cable provider.

Increasingly, cable companies have been offering their customers free Wi-Fi in public areas outside the home via their mobile devices. In fact, the cable companies taking part in this initiative already have over 50,000 hot spots.

Additionally, Comcast revealed a number of other ventures, including an app allowing people to use gestures to control their TVs. The cable operator has been working on making hand-held devices like iPhones and iPads function as remote controls, and now an iPhone can be used as a remote control, and the keypad can be used to search for content by title as part of Comcast's X1 cloud-enabled TV platform, which stores content in a virtual file. The service will launch on Comcast's Boston systems before reaching the rest of the U.S.

Another endeavor is Comcast's Project Dayview service, which can transform TVs into virtual planners featuring meeting schedules, TV schedules, emails and traffic reports. Project Dayview works on TVs, laptops, tablets and smartphones. Finally, Comcast announced that it inked a deal to carry Outside Television, a cable network

based on outdoor sports magazine *Outside*, on its systems in cities such as Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, Portland and San Francisco as part of a specialty tier of sports and lifestyle channels.

NATC chief, Michael Powell, a former chairman of the FCC, the U.S. regulatory agency, warned that the government should not over-regulate the Internet because it is a developing industry. However, there is some concern among media watchdogs that the absence of government oversight or weak oversight could lead cable and phone companies that deliver broadband to have an advantage over other services.

Ad-Skipper Flares U.S. Broadcasters

Dish Network's new Auto Hop feature, which allows its U.S. satellite TV subscribers to skip advertisements while watching recorded broadcast TV shows, is ruffling feathers at the major U.S. broadcast networks, and FOX Broadcasting, NBCUniversal and CBS Corp. have sued the satellite company.

Although pay-TV subscribers with digital video recorders are already able to fast-forward through commercials, Auto Hop goes one step further: Dish customers can record primetime programming for later viewing, and during commercial breaks, the screen blacks out, with the program returning within seconds. The service is only offered for primetime broadcast programming, not for cable programming, nor can it be used for live broadcast shows such as sports events.

The networks claim that the ad-skipping feature violates copyrights and, according to a statement from FOX, is "destroying the fundamental underpinnings of the broadcast television ecosystem." Although not all of Dish Network's 14 million subscribers have access to Auto Hop, TV executives are worried the service could adversely impact their business model by keeping them from being able to charge premiums for their commercial time. The service was rolled out on May 10, around the time broadcasters began their negotiations with advertisers over the sale of commercial time for the 2012-2013 TV season.

FOX, NBC and CBS filed their suits in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles, while Dish Network countered with its own suit against FOX, NBC, CBS and ABC (which is expected to join the other broadcast nets) in U.S. District Court in New York. Dish does not believe Auto Hop violates any laws and is not convinced it will "substantially change established consumer behavior."

Years ago, the broadcast networks sued a similar service, ReplayTV, and won on copyright infringement grounds.

SwissTelevision Programs



Sinestesia

A film by Erik Bernasconi

"Sinestesia" chronicles the vicissitudes of four young adults in two moments of their lives which are in turn linked to two dramatic episodes three years apart. The intervening years see the characters confronted by the usual joys and difficulties of everyday life. However, they also find themselves having to react to a destiny which, every now and again, places a cross-roads in our way.

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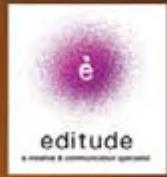


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Main screenwriter & Head of Writing Team: YséBrisson - Writing Team: Julien Mutter, Jason Long & MichelZgarka

Concept / Story line: Michel Zgarka - Producer/Show Runner: Randy Bradshaw - Directors: Randy Bradshaw, Patricia Harris Seeley...

Associate producers: M.A. Nour-Eddine // Bruno Cavelier d'Esclavelles // Georges Leclère // Julien Mutter - Design & Visual Look: Samuel Maman & Shaddy Gauthier Cyr
Wardrobe creator: Samuel Maman - Post-production: Banff Center // Supervising Producer: Kerry Stauffer - Executive Director - Film & Media, The Banff Centre

CREDITS NON CONTRACTUAL



(Continued from Page 4)

Digital TV In Hungary

The Hungarian transition to digital broadcasting should be complete by October 2013, but in reality the actual completion date is still unknown.

However, Hungary's digital TV industry is faring very well. In the DTT sector, for example, Antenna

Hungária's FTA service MinDig TV is now available in over 300,000 homes with seven channels. Its pay-TV counterpart MinDig TV Extra has over 63,000 subscribers for its 24 channels.

Hungary's pay sector is made up of a large number of local and regional cable operators (more than 400) and a few larger operators (UPC Hungary, Fibernet, and T-Kabel) and by the end of 2010, 20 percent of the country's cable households were already digital.

Last September, 46 percent of UPC's 619,200 subscribers were digital. In November 2010 the number of cable households of Magyar Telekom was almost 312,000.

The Hungarian market is also served by several satellite packagers with a total of five operators serving some 840,000 homes with Digi TV the market leader with about 43 percent of subscribers. UPC owns the satellite platform UPC Direct, which has

more than 210,000 subscribers, or 22 percent of satellite homes. T-Home has 28 percent and the rest are shared between Hello HD and Magyar Telekom, which is also making significant strides in its rollout of interactive services, like DTH platform Interactive Sat TV, which launched last December.

ICM Agents Get Trophy

Top agents at Los Angeles-based International Creative Management (ICM), one of Hollywood's leading agencies, completed a buyout of the firm from longtime chairman and CEO Jeff Berg and Michigan-based private equity firm Rizvi Traverse Management. Twenty-nine agents representing a cross-section of the firm's

core business (film, TV, publishing and touring) are now partners of the 400-person firm, which was renamed ICM Partners.

The buyout plan began after a group of senior agents led by president Chris Silbermann demanded a new ownership structure, allowing the agents to control their business and reinvest profits to rebuild the agency, which has been struggling.

Rizvi Traverse Management acquired controlling interest in ICM for over \$75 million in 2005. The next year, the firm invested another \$70 million so that ICM could acquire TV agency powerhouse Broder Webb Chervin Silbermann, which improved ICM's financial position. However, the merger put a strain on the corporate culture, which led to the buyout.

According to a statement released by the new partners, Rizvi Traverse and Berg sold their equity interest "for a combination of cash, preferred non-voting shares and an ongoing interest in certain assets of the company." Although he plans to remain with the agency, Berg will relinquish his board seat and management role.

The new partners include Chris Silbermann, Ted Chervin, Kevin Crotty, Chris von Goetz, Eddy Yabians, Richard Levy, Greg Lipstone, Sloan Harris, Robert Broder and Michael Kagan.

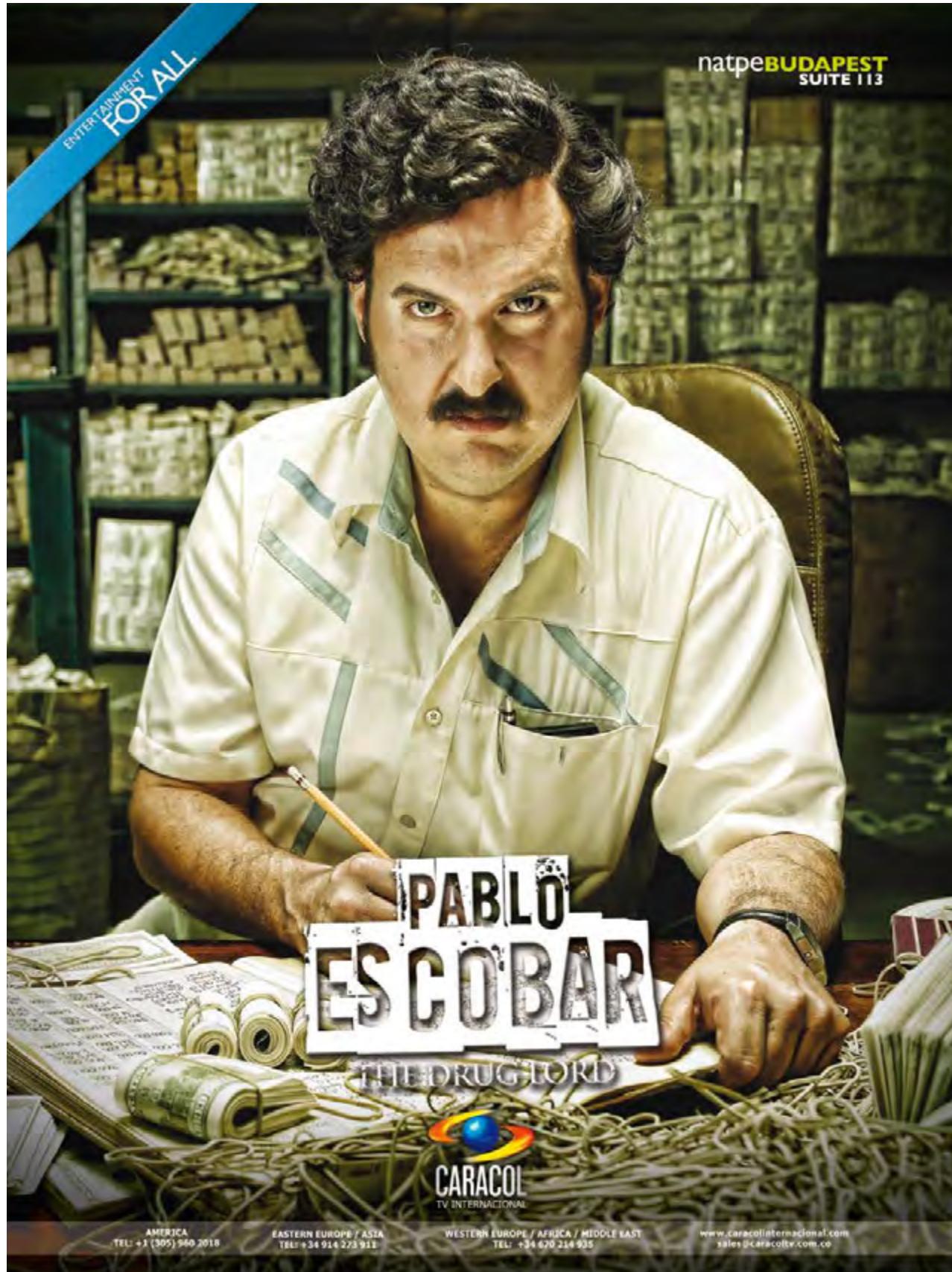
ICM has a powerful lineup in scripted and non-scripted TV, representing top producers and international TV formats such as Chuck Lorre, Shonda Rhimes, and Studio Lambert/Undercover Boss. Plus, the firm represents talent such as Al Pacino, Ellen DeGeneres, Megan Fox and Josh Hutcherson.

NATPE's New CEO: Rod Perth

Nearly a month after former president and CEO Rick Feldman left his post (after nine years), U.S. TV industry executive Rod Perth was named the new president and CEO of NATPE. The Los Angeles-based association's co-chairs Jordan Levin and Chris Grant made the announcement in late May.

As president and CEO of NATPE, Perth will be in charge of a senior management team consisting of six direct reports and a total staff of 20 people. He will report to the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors.

Prior to joining the non-profit organization, Perth was president of RHP Media Consulting. Before that, he was co-founder and president of Television for the ReelzChannel TV Network. In addition, he was president of Jim Henson Television Worldwide and president of USA Network Entertainment. Perth started his career at CBS Television Station Group and subsequently ran late-night programming for the CBS Television Network. He has served as a board member at Marvel and CNET network, part of CBS interactive. He's also an adjunct professor at Los Angeles-based USC's Film School. ●





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Jane Fonda Creates a New Hollywood: Stardom With a Cause

Anyone even remotely familiar with Jane Fonda would never dream of calling her a "Plain Jane." The American actress, sex symbol and political activist has worn many hats, and she may even try on a few more to round out her multifaceted and fascinating life.

Though nine biographies on Fonda have already been published, journalist-biographer Patricia Bosworth is the first woman to publish one, and her 2011 book is even more unique because many of the stories found on its pages have never before been shared with the public. In *Jane Fonda: The Private Life of a Public Woman* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 600 pages, \$30.00), Bosworth explores the many personas Fonda has morphed into over the years, revealing insight into the multitalented actress's life through seven years of research and interviews with current and former friends, family and Fonda herself (Fonda even gave Bosworth access to her FBI files).

Bosworth argues that throughout her "serial life," Fonda has had many personalities and has become many personas: actress, movie star, sex symbol, political activist, workout guru and tycoon wife. Many of her identities have been tied to a man, beginning with her father, Henry Fonda. The portrait Bosworth paints of iconic American actor Henry Fonda is very different from Tom Joad, the migrant farm worker he portrays in *The Grapes of Wrath* and the idealist juror he made famous in *12 Angry Men*. As a child, it was difficult for Jane Fonda to reconcile her unloving father with the kind men he embodied on the silver screen.

Fonda's childhood was a troubled and unhappy one. Her mother, Frances, caused a great deal of the pain Fonda felt growing up, as she didn't hide her preference for Fonda's brother, Peter, who also became an actor. Additionally, Frances's suicide when Fonda was only 13 years old had a profound impact on her, and was the driving force behind her decision to tackle the role of the suicidal



Gloria in 1969's *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* many years later. Her father was no better at providing a nurturing childhood. She doesn't remember him showing her affection or praise, and Bosworth notes that she was constantly trying to catch his attention and find a father figure over the years because "all her life, Jane longed to connect with him and blamed herself when she couldn't." She even became an actress because she felt closer to her father when she was acting, and hoped this would help them bond.

Her search for approval and a father figure led her to entangle herself with various men, and to marry and divorce three of them. After a string of college boyfriends, Fonda found herself living with Greek director Andreas Voutsinas, who became her acting coach/mentor and lover (despite the fact that he was gay) because she "needed someone else to create [her] life. [She] felt more comfortable when [she] was with him; he could take charge," which suggests that Fonda craved a man capable of grounding her and giving her direction, much like a father. However, Voutsinas was all-controlling and directors often forbade his presence on-set while Fonda filmed. Looking back, Fonda characterized her time with Voutsinas as "Three years of

depression and passivity on my part."

Fonda moved from Voutsinas into the arms of her first husband, the much older French director Roger Vadim, who transformed her into a sex symbol, and with whom she had a daughter, Vanessa. Despite the difficulties that came along with their open marriage and sexual experimentation, Fonda recalls Vadim fondly: "[he] helped me move out from under my father's shadow." But what she didn't seem to realize at the time was that she allowed him to control her. For instance, despite her aversion to the role, she starred in *Barbarella* (1968) upon Vadim's bidding.

But Fonda grew restless and bored with merely being a movie star. With America in turmoil over the war in Vietnam, political activism — particularly antiwar demonstrations — was an attractive new direction that drew her away from Vadim and Vanessa, and eventually led her to her second husband, antiwar activist/politician Tom Hayden. She was inspired by Hayden and felt he was someone who could teach her about devoting herself to a cause. But their marriage ended after about 16 years due to his infidelities and verbal cruelties.

Vanessa and Troy (Fonda's son with Hayden) weren't happy when their mother began dating media tycoon Ted Turner because, "Once again she'd chosen a powerful, opinionated man to run things — she seemed to need a man like that to anchor her," according to Bosworth. But the marriage wouldn't last, largely due to Turner's womanizing.

Bosworth's description of Fonda's 1972 trip to North Vietnam and the incident that led to her notorious moniker "Hanoi Jane" (Fonda was photographed on a North Vietnamese antiaircraft gun) are proof that despite the two women's history (they first met at the Actors Studio in 1961), Bosworth maintains a certain distance from her subject. The author demonstrates her skepticism about how Fonda could have been so naive regarding the repercussions of her radio broadcasts about discontinuing the bombing of North Vietnamese dikes and her decision

to sit on the antiaircraft gun. Bosworth writes, "Somehow she didn't understand that the North Vietnamese would use her radio spots for propaganda purposes." However, just two pages later, the author downplays the impact of Fonda's radio addresses in what seems like an attempt to redeem her. This underscores how important it is for readers to consider Bosworth's connection to Fonda and any underlying motives she might have for writing the book.

The author provides necessary background information about the men and the political and social atmosphere of important periods in her life so that we better understand Fonda. This is particularly valuable when it comes to the infamous Hanoi Jane incident, which generated a backlash among the American public that adversely impacted her career. Bosworth's prose flows like a novel, engaging readers and making them feel as if they are personally involved in Fonda's life.

Bosworth argues that Fonda heralded the advent of celebrity advocacy because "More than any other star, Jane was responsible for the creation of a new political Hollywood where no career could be complete without a cause." But she also wonders what would have become of Fonda's career had she focused her incredible energy solely on her acting, rather than stretching herself among her acting and numerous causes. One repercussion: because of her politics, Fonda lamented that she did not receive many viable script offers during the early 1970s, and it's widely believed that she lost the Oscar for Best Actress for *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* due to her intense antiwar activities. After all, for Bosworth, and perhaps other fans as well, "she is far more compelling as Bree Daniels [in *Klute*] than she ever was as Hanoi Jane." Bosworth posits, "If she'd wanted to, she could have been one of the most interesting and challenging women ever onstage and on film."

Bosworth's book holds true to the title; we really do learn about the *private* life of the very public Jane Fonda. The actress even refused to talk about her private life on *The Dick Cavett Show*, but Bosworth manages to reveal personal insights and new information in her book. Not only do we hear from Fonda herself, but also from her brother Peter and other family members and friends. This is not merely a recounting of already-told Fonda stories, so whether you're fond of Jane or not, Bosworth's book is a worthwhile read. **SA**



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Nets Showy, Studios Content, Buyers Exhausted But Ecstatic

By DOM SERAFINI

It seems that all three international TV industry events centered around the L.A. Screenings — the Upfronts, the indie screenings and the studio screenings — left most people involved happy.

At the Upfronts in New York City, which opened the bazaars, the five major U.S. TV broadcast networks were satisfied with the over \$9 billion in ad revenue they secured for the 2012-13 season for the pre-sale of some 80 percent of their ad inventory.

The networks also showed off something they've been longing for. For some years now, U.S. TV stations have wanted to make viewers laugh with comedies instead of cry with dramas — specifically since 1997 when NBC had 18 comedies on its schedule, and ABC and CBS had 12 each. For the 2012-13 season, the nets picked up 22 comedies. NBC now has seven new comedies.

For the U.S. TV stations, comedies are less risky than one-hour dramas, because if a sitcom fails it affects only a half hour of the schedule. Plus, comedies are cheaper to produce. However, having too many comedies scheduled back-to-back is considered risky.

As for the age-old question of whether



Power's Susan Waddell, Pepe Echegaray

the Upfronts model is still current, Jack Myers, media economist and publisher of the *Jack Myers Media Business Report*, said, "10 years ago everyone was calling for the elimination of the Upfronts, but we see signs of them getting stronger, not weaker, and the proof is in the 'Newfronts.' In the last few weeks, we've seen the online video 'Newfronts,' and every cable network has held their Upfronts. There have been nearly 100 between February and May," he explained.

While Myers expected that some of the broadcast nets' Upfront money went to online video instead, that's a good

thing for the broadcast nets, too. "A lot of the money that's shifting to the online marketplace is shifting to the network's own video assets — like ABC.com, CBS's TV.com and Hulu. About 50 percent of the money spent on online video will go to the broadcast and cable networks, and the lion's share of that goes to broadcast," he said.

At the L.A. Screenings — the event that follows the Upfronts and takes place in and around Hollywood — the studios (which produced and/or are distributing 44 of 50 new series) were largely content with the buyers' reactions to the pilots and specials screened. International



ARTEAR's Luciana Egurrola

buyers, in turn, were happy with the still large number of dramas, since sitcoms usually don't travel well, even though some acquisition execs showed interest in Sony Pictures's new comedy *Men at Work*, and Lionsgate's new comedy *Anger Management*, starring Charlie Sheen.

According to Myers, "They've spent \$3 billion in program development this year, and the broadcast networks remain the engine that leads the video train." It's no wonder, then, that with that kind of money thrown at them, the studios are content.

Around 1,500 buyers from 66 countries attended the Screenings, basically the same number as last year. However, while all international TV outlets were present, the traditional ones sent fewer executives, while the number of IPTV buyers, such as Netflix and Hulu, increased. Some distributors make a distinction between IPTV and digital rights, with the latter considered the sub-channel of broadcast TV.

Among the buyers, some buzzed about shows were: *Chicago Fire* (NBCUni for NBC), about life in a fire department; *The Following* (WB for FOX midseason), starring Kevin Bacon; *Nashville* (Lionsgate for ABC), dealing with politics and



A+E's Mayra Bracer, Marielle Zuccarelli



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L.A. Screenings (continued)

(Continued from Page 10)



Viacom's Nickelodeon Latin America organized a press conference for its 11-11 *En Mi Cuadra Nada Cuadra*, a co-production with Miami-based Somos

music; *The New Normal* (Twentieth Century Fox for NBC), a comedy about a gay couple and their surrogate; *Last Resort* (Sony Pictures for ABC), about a U.S. submarine with nuclear capability that fights the bad guys within the U.S. government (the pilot reportedly cost \$14 million); and *The Mob Doctor* (Sony for FOX), about a surgeon who's blackmailed by the Mafia.

Some buyers also liked *Vegas* (CBS Studios International for CBS), a Western set in 1960s Las Vegas. Other popular CBSSI shows include: *Emily Owens, M.D.* (CW), a hospital drama with Mamie Gummer, daughter of Meryl Streep; *Elementary* (CBS), a modern take on Sherlock Holmes; and *Beauty and the Beast* (CW), a police version of the fairy tale. Buzzed about shows from Disney Media Distribution include *Red Widow*

(ABC), about the widow of a criminal who inherits a crime syndicate; *Zero Hour* (ABC), a conspiracy thriller; and *Mistresses* (ABC), about four women and their love affairs.

This year, Sony Pictures offered buyers warm-up blankets during its screening, possibly in response to *VideoAge Daily*'s story at NATPE 2012 ("How to Dress for the L.A. Screenings") in which buyers were quoted jokingly complaining about the very cold screening rooms.

In the 45 years that the L.A. Screenings have been held, a third event focusing on Latin American buyers has developed around the Screenings and become a lucrative business for the independents.

Eighty companies exhibited at this year's L.A. Screenings, setting up shop in the suites of the Century Plaza Hotel in the Century City area of Los Angeles, the

largest turnout in recent years (last year saw 74 companies screen).

The indie portion started May 15 (while the studios began screening on the 18) and featured three evening parties hosted by Venevision, which, traditionally, opened the market; Caracol, which premiered its *Pablo Escobar, The Evil Boss* series; and Telefilms, with a sit-down dinner after the screening of its new movie catalog.

After a slow start, the traffic in the corridors picked up on day two and many distributors reported good business, which kept up until May 18, when all indie exhibitors made way for the studios.

On May 18 Mexico's TV Azteca hosted a bash to honor Marcel Vinay, Sr.'s 45 years in the TV industry. All of the top-level executives of Latin America's TV networks, including competitors such as Televisa, attended the party.

Earlier, on May 16, Viacom's Nickelodeon Latin America organized a press conference for its 11-11 *En Mi Cuadra Nada Cuadra*, a co-production with Miami-based Somos. Viacom also announced an exclusive five-year volume distribution deal with Televisa.

Since the indies begin screening earlier than the studios, many Latin buyers stay in L.A. for over 10 days, compared to five for those from other countries. Canadians arrived on May 14 for the five-day series shopping spree, while the rest of the world arrived Sunday, May 20, for a Monday start.

Now for the news circulating around



Telemundo's Esperanza Garay (c.) with Caracol's Camilo Acuña, Marcela Montoya

the corridors of the Century Plaza Hotel and the studios' screening rooms: one piece of news follows Argentina's recently imposed restrictions on the purchase of U.S. dollars. According to some broadcasters familiar with the issue, after a complete freeze on U.S. dollars transferred out of the country, the government will develop a priority list to facilitate program importers and other international TV companies. In any case, each transaction will have to be approved by the AFIP, the country's national tax agency.

In Mexico, TV Azteca's networks were dropped by the country's cable-TV systems serving a combined 4.4 million viewers over some retransmission fees. Megacable, Mexico's largest MSO with 1.9 million subs, dropped the channel first, followed by Cablemas and TVI, with a total of 1.4 million subs (both controlled by Televisa), and Telecable, which together with Cablecom serves 1.1 million homes. Mexico's antitrust commission is now looking into the matter. ●



TV Azteca's Marcel Vinay Sr. and Comarex Marcel Vinay Jr. while picking up the plaque commemorating Vinay's 45 years in the international TV industry from Frecuencia Latina Peru's Cecilia Gomez (on behalf of Frecuencia prez Baruch Ivcher)



Televisa's sales team gathering at the L.A. Screenings precon

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Risk and Reward is a Fine Balance in Today's Schedules

BY BOB JENKINS

W herever one looks, schedules are packed with revivals of successes from bygone decades and multiple seasons of hit shows — and apparently this has nothing to do with money.

Jan Salling, Sales director of Nordic World, admitted, "There has been a spate of revivals of old classics recently in Scandinavia. *Fort Boyard*, *Big Brother*, *Gladiators*, all these and more have been revived recently, and it is also certainly the case that successful shows are commissioned in great volume and played for several seasons a year — and there is an obvious economic advantage to that." Salling feels that, "In addition to relatively safe and cheap ratings points there is also a benefit to a broadcaster, especially in the case of reviving a classic, of boosting brand value. Audiences remember the old shows and feel a warm nostalgia for them."

This is a view shared by Jens Richter, managing director of Germany's SevenOne International, who insisted, "While there is definitely a trend towards revivals of old successes, I am not convinced this is driven by difficult economic times for broadcasters. Times are more economically challenging for audiences and old favorites, from a time they remember as being more economically secure, allow them to see life through rose-tinted spectacles!" Although he also cautioned that, "Revival is OK for certain entertainment/game shows, but it doesn't really work for reality or drama. This is because they are both character driven, and also [because] the way drama is done these days is so very different from the way in which it was done even five years ago, the chances of a successful revival are very slim."

But there are other factors at play here. Morten Aass, CEO of Stockholm, Sweden-based NICE Entertainment Group highlighted an increasing focus by management on making every slot profitable, and, as he noted, "Once this was best achieved through acquisition since, even though you got lower ratings, the cost of acquisition was around one tenth of that of local production, but this is no longer the case and, as a consequence, local production has increased dramatically over the past few years."



NICE's Morten Aass

And Nordic World's Salling added: "Many of these older shows are being revived on smaller digital channels. This is part of an overall strategy by the main broadcasters who are losing market share on their main channels, but, by building these smaller channels, are maintaining, or even growing, their overall market share."

In London, Greg Phillips, president, Content Television and Content Digital, acknowledged the benefits of revivals and long-runs of successful shows but cautioned, "As with all things in life there has to be a balance here. Ordering in bulk, especially with game shows, talent shows and reality makes a saving, but there is always the risk that the show will die, or trail off, and the

broadcaster will be left with episodes they know will not rate, but which they still have to play, as they have paid for them." Phillips also warned, "While audiences do have a tendency to watch shows with which they are familiar, there will come a point when they are bored with that show, and the very familiarity which once caused them to switch on, will now cause them to switch off." He added, "While there are savings in bulk orders and revivals save on development costs, these savings represent a nice bonus rather than a reason for making a positive commissioning decision."

With regards to whether these costs savings are enough to make a positive commissioning decision or not, that option is not always open to a broadcaster.

Rob Clark, director of Global Entertainment Development for FremantleMedia in the U.K. insisted, "While it is true that many broadcasters want to play successful shows in bulk, and that does offer a lower cost per episode, not all producers/IP holders will let them do this. At Fremantle we only have one season a year of our three big entertainment formats, *Idol*, *Got Talent* and *X-Factor*. Some broadcasters actually like this because it gives a certain geography to their schedule, and print and Internet media know what's coming and what they will have to write about and when."

Valerie Cabrera, executive vice president of Entertainment One Television International in Los Angeles agreed: "Typically we run one season



Jan Salling of Nordic World



Content's Greg Phillips

per year, but with *The Firm*, for example, we went straight to 22 episodes, so there is no formula here — it's on a show-by-show basis." Cabrera went on to suggest that, "Unfortunately there's no real safe approach when it comes to knowing which shows will be successful and which will not be successful."

This is a view shared by Content's Phillips, who said, "There are no absolutes in television. There are no absolute guaranteed ratings winners, and there are no absolute programming policies either. One week I'll offer a broadcaster something absolutely new and fresh and they'll tell me they're sticking with the tried and tested and the next time I speak to them, they'll tell me they're looking for something new and untried."

Whatever the broadcast policy, and whatever the reasons behind it, one thing all the executives interviewed agreed on is that no broadcaster can live without innovation.

NICE's Aass was adamant that "audiences will reward channels that are creative and risk taking. When they turn on a channel and find they're watching season 10 of *Fort Boyard*, they tend to turn over!"

Content's Phillips concurred, pointing out, "Broadcasters need to be aware that they are not just competing with each other, but are also in competition with all other forms of home entertainment such as gaming and social networking. And, if that were not reason enough to prompt innovation, producers should always remember that if they do not take risks they'll never be the next Simon Cowell, and broadcasters need to keep in mind that without backing those risks, they'll never have the next *Britain's Got Talent*!"

"Revival is OK for certain entertainment/game shows, but it doesn't really work for reality or drama."

-Jens Richter of SevenOne International

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Photo by Fitz Carlile

Biarritz Makes French TV Ritzy

(Continued from Cover)

VideoAge spoke with Mathieu Bejot, executive director of TV France International, and with registered exhibitors to find out their plans for this important event in their calendar year.

This year, the event opens on a Monday morning, one day earlier than usual. TVFI's Bejot explained that the decision to start the market a day earlier will "allow buyers to also attend the Cartoon Forum [September 11-14], to be held in the nearby city of Toulouse," which lies a bit to the East of Biarritz, the coastal city located near the Spanish border that's playing host to *Le Rendez-Vous*.

Bejot reported organizers are expecting 65 French companies to exhibit for 220-230 buyers from over 50 countries. He expects that about half of the 1,300 programs introduced at *Le Rendez-Vous* to be new titles. Last year, the event drew 234 buyers from 157 international broadcasting companies, representing 56 countries.

Sandrine Frantz of Boulogne-Billancourt, France-based Lukarn announced that her company will present 20 programs from the library and approximately 50 from the new catalog that have not been presented at past markets. These titles are "mostly documentaries, but also some new classical music shows and pop rock shows," she said.

Also from Boulogne, System TV will be in Biarritz with seven new titles, according to Sales manager Hiam El Khoury-Brissard. Consistent with the French feel of the market, the company will shine a spotlight on the series *Fabulous French Villages*.

Paris-based GAD will also bring a



An evening soiree

large number of titles that haven't been presented at past markets. One Sales executive reported, "We have 21 new films." Some of the highlights include: *Beneath the Lingerie*, *London, Capital Under Strain*, *The Passage*, *The French Coast from the Sky* and *Faces from the Coast*.

On the other end of the spectrum, Paris-based Ankama will bring just one new title, *Wakfu*, to market, according to Romy Broda, International TV Sales manager.

Exhibiting companies said that they will focus their efforts on a wide range of territories. While Lukarn's Frantz reported she would not neglect her regular clients, she will also focus her efforts on Asia, and China especially, at this market. System TV's El Khoury-Brissard is concentrating on Europe, with a special emphasis on Scandinavia. Pamela Leu, head of International TV Sales for Paris-based Films Distribution noted that she'll focus on Eastern Europe, Germany, Spain and Italy. Ankama's Broda insisted the company is taking a broad approach, targeting "all territories."

According to TVFI's Bejot, *Le Rendez-Vous* "is our prime showcase event in terms of participants, effectiveness and resources (both human and financial). It helps generate up to 25 percent of

annual sales for some of our members. More importantly, it is very focused and, like all screening events of the kind, it provides our members with immediate feedback from buyers."

Participants shouldn't expect many big changes this time around. "The core of the event remains screening and meeting with French content providers, and we are not changing much to an event that's running rather smoothly!" Bejot said.

He continued, "Our two goals [for the event] are to give buyers a chance to sit down and screen as much as they wish so they can get a good overview of the latest French production and to provide buyers with quality time with French content providers."

All of the exhibitors surveyed agreed that documentaries sell best at *Le Rendez-Vous*, with Films Distribution looking to capitalize on the trend with new documentary, *A Special Day*. Lukarn's Frantz added that this genre "sells the best anywhere in terms of quantity, but not in terms of price." Last year, animation titles generated the largest number of sales at 34.8 million euro, while documentaries boasted the largest growth (13.7 percent), rising to 26.4 million euro. Meanwhile, drama decreased 1.6 percent to 19.1 million euro and format sales climbed 4.9 percent to 17.2 million euro. Films Distribution's Leu has also found that feature films sell well at *Le Rendez-Vous*.

Asked about how the market's



Le Rendez-Vous features conferences and round tables

logistics are set up, Bejot responded, "Buyers pay their own transportation, at least to Paris, as we provide a chartered airplane from Paris's Charles de Gaulle airport to Biarritz and back. We offer accommodation, meals and market registration. We will also provide a shuttle from Biarritz to Toulouse for Cartoon Forum participants."

However, sellers must fend for themselves, as they "take care of their own transportation, and we charge them both for accommodation and meals and for part of the set-up." But, he added, "TV France covers a large part of the overall budget of the event," Bejot said.

In terms of special events, Bejot commented, "We're proud to host an International Emmy Awards Semi-final Judging for preschool programs the day before *Le Rendez-Vous*." Additionally, he said, "our dinner parties will again focus on new programs in an entertaining way."

In addition to the traditional market overview conference, Bejot stated, "We will organize a conference on documentary and a press conference on the study we are conducting with CNC on export figures in 2011." **SA**



A view of the exhibition hall



The 2011 event opened with TVFI's Mathieu Bejot and Xavier Gouyou Beauchamps offering an overview of the market



Individual screening areas



Buyers break for a seaside lunch



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When Content Is UbiQuitous

(Continued from Cover)

head of Digital Business Development at MIP-TV and MIPCOM (Note: UbiQ is not affiliated with Reed Midem.) "There are many existing events but no true one-stop shop that gathers digital and interactive content creators and all content editors and platforms.

"In the digital business, it's all about identifying the right partners with whom to reach consumers. We wanted to create a pragmatic, cost-effective market that included TV, music, apps and games," he said.

Flatres said the Paris location is just right for those in Europe, easily accessible from most other countries, and the City of Light's plethora of hotel options offers something for every price point, even tech start-ups that might be strapped for cash (for now).

With worldwide maturation of connected TV and the increasing popularity of tablets, Flatres said, now was the perfect time to kick off a market like UbiQ.

"Tablets are becoming complementary to the bigger screen. And every TV company needs to tap into additional revenues, and take advantage of all the other tools available for consumers to interact with their content."

"TV is turning fully digital," Flatres said, adding that the TV industry can learn a lot about how to face digital proliferation from the music side. Monday afternoon will see a musical platform showcase that'll include representatives from Universal Music, Disney Mobile and more discussing the past 10 years, and the future of the music business.

But, Flatres said, "Every industry can learn from each other. Brand integration is very important, and it involves so



Gwénaël Flatres of UbiQ

many forms of media these days."

Irv Holender, of Multicom Entertainment Group, concurred that the television industry is facing a lot of unknowns when it comes to digital business models. Currently, there are linear deals (sponsorships), in addition to VOD and downloads. Many of the digital companies offer "revenue sharing, but in order to do that, you must first spend the money to deliver the content, and pay to convert the content upfront. That's not easy — especially for independents," he said.

"It's the Wild West out there, and there's no big money in it yet," Holender said. "All the new technologies come with different business models, different methods of delivery, different compression needs and different standards."

Flatres offered his own predictions for the digital model: "With the cloud technologies and the development of very high-speed and 4G networks, I think that download-to-own or to-rent will die. The streaming model will definitely win the game. In France, which is the most advanced country on IPTV, the most popular model is streaming."

As of press time, 226 companies had registered for the event. Flatres expects to reach 2,000 registrants by June 18. He is hoping registration numbers will triple in the coming years.

While the event is in Paris, companies from 30 countries across the world will attend, including Singapore, Australia, Turkey, the U.S., Canada and Latin America. "It will be a strong marketplace in the heart of Europe, not just a European marketplace," Flatres said.

Participating companies include YouTube, Viacom Media Networks, Disney Mobile, Ubisoft, Bit.ly and FremantleMedia.

The event will feature two full days of conferences. Monday morning's keynote on "Capturing New Audiences" will be presented by Randi Zuckerberg, CEO of RtoZ Media, and former marketing director of Facebook, and Doug Scott, president of Ogilvy Entertainment. That will be followed by a social media showcase, a branded entertainment showcase, tech demos from five leading technology companies, a second screen/social TV showcase, a music platform showcase and a web video showcase (which includes Allen DeBevoise, the CEO and co-founder of Machinima, the number one channel on YouTube).

Tuesday's keynote, "Monetizing Digital Media" will feature Louis-Pierre Pharand, head of Ubisoft and Bruce Kirkland of Tsunami Entertainment. It will be followed by global digital media case studies, a games showcase, a measurement and data showcase, and a mobile showcase.



Inside Palais Brongniart, the event venue

The final session, on June 19, will feature a YouTube Showcase. A YouTube representative and major French music label will show how to maximize promotion and revenue streams through the use of YouTube.

Asked how this market differs from others around the globe, Flatres said: "Our target is completely clear. We are bringing together companies from TV, music, games and social media to share experiences on how to capture, engage, monetize audiences and measure ROI in the different arena. The idea is not to think of them as different segments," he said. ●

DIGITAL RIGHTS AND INTERNET RIGHTS

At first, digital rights and Internet rights may appear to be one in the same, but Ettore Botta, president of the Los Angeles-based online marketplace Global Entertainment Media Markets, explained that:

"Digital television (digital rights and/or digital sales) refers to FTA or Free Terrestrial TV, specifically to the Free Terrestrial TV sub channels or multiplexes."

Internet rights and/or sales refers to channels that are distributed via broadband. Since it uses the Internet protocol, at times it is referred to as IPTV rights. Internet rights can be subcategorized as streaming and download. Streaming can be live, time-shifted (so-called "catch up" for later viewing) and on-demand. Furthermore, Internet rights can be for sell-through, download-to-own, download-to-rent and download-to-burn.

License fees and windows for digital rights follow those of traditional TV, however Internet rights are evolving with different business models and an Internet license term can last for up to 10 or 15 years.

The two key business models for Internet rights are: Advance minimum guarantee (MG) plus back-end revenue sharing and the not-so-desirable revenue sharing only.

Advance MG can be in the order of \$1,000 to \$2,000 per hour, while revenue sharing is usually a minimum 25 percent of the retail price from directly owned IPTV channels and 50 percent from third party IPTV channels (when combined with an advance MG business model)."



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NATPE Budapest

(Continued from Cover)

NATPE. "We're looking forward to working with NATPE, this time in a different setting. Their approach is a good one, which is not to change too much this first time and then look at what may need improvement, if anything, for next year," said Federico Vargas, Canada-based CCI Entertainment's director of Sales.

Patrick Elmendorff, managing director of Germany's Studio 100 Media, was also "looking forward to experiencing the market under NATPE's organizational skills."

Similarly, Mark Benmore, VP of Sales for U.K.-based Content Television and Digital said his company was "looking forward to experiencing [its] first NATPE Budapest event."

Beth Braen, NATPE's vice president of Marketing, confirmed that there won't be any major changes this year because the organization's main focus is to "learn and understand the needs of the buyers and sellers that attend." However, she went on to say that next year could bring some changes based on those findings. "We will look at how the event can evolve to make it as productive and efficient as possible for everyone," she said.

From Madrid, Melissa Pillow, Telemundo Internacional's Sales director for Europe, predicted, "NATPE's control...should bring a higher attendance of buyers compared to previous years." Mandy Rogers, Sales and Business Development manager at South Africa-based multi-pan-African content provider M-Net agreed: "The success of NATPE in the U.S. and the fact that it is a well-known name...may attract new buyers and distributors." A month ahead of the market, Braen noted that registration was "pacing on track with years past." This year, NATPE charged a "nominal, upfront fee for buyers, so they are financially invested in attending."

By the beginning of May, 250 registered buyers had already completed their paid registration, and NATPE expected that number to grow as the event approached. Braen also reported that, "all of the major studios are returning," and new companies have registered as well.

Among the exhibitors *VideoAge* surveyed, the general consensus was the market mainly attracts buyers from



The 2011 opening night reception

Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the Middle East and Western Europe. NATPE Budapest holds an important space on the market calendar because, as Studio 100's Elmendorff said, it offers companies the "opportunity to meet with broadcasters and clients...who usually do not attend other markets such as MIP-TV and MIPCOM."

Asked whether the association with NATPE would increase the number of conferences in Budapest, Braen replied that the organization would evaluate this possibility with the new CEO.

According to Braen, the organization's main goal for NATPE Budapest is consistent with its goal for every NATPE event: to "organize a successful market that results in the maximum amount of networking and business deals possible."

Participants are looking to get down to business and will come to Hungary equipped with programming geared toward the region. Canada-based Breakthrough Entertainment is looking to make its mark: "Since we could not attend DISCOP East in 2011, we have approximately 35 new programs across a variety of genres to present to many of our Eastern and Central European clients for the first time," said Kate Blank, director of International Distribution.

The company is pushing its lifestyle, factual and children's programming.

Jo Lovell, director of Program Sales, Europe for New York-based A+E Networks finds their "HISTORY [channel] flagship series...have traditionally been very popular in the CEE region," adding that "more recently, our Lifetime catalog...has attracted the attention of several buyers."

London-based Power recently acquired 21 new first-run feature films from Bankside Films, which the company is putting on display, as they find buyers have a need for action/adventure, disaster, and family programming. Power treats the market as an "opportunity to take an inclusive approach to all CEE territories," according to VP of Sales and Acquisitions Steve Turney.

Similarly, Vargas said CCI Entertainment is also looking to capitalize on interest in films with its slate of six thrillers, in addition to its children's series and lifestyle programming. He elaborated, "The movie thrillers are a priority for us at this market, as this genre fits well with the programming needs in the territory." But, as always, he noted, "the most successful genre really depends on the needs of the individual broadcasters."

Telemundo's Pillow has found,



Scenes from the event's 2011 edition

"Traditionally, telenovelas are one of the most demanded products in this market," but she has also noticed a demand for children's programming and even "many requests for scripted formats from Central and Eastern European producers."

Roberto Corrente, Sales executive at Colombia's Caracol Television agreed that "Telenovelas and drama series are without any doubt the favorite genres" in the region. "That's why we consider NATPE Budapest an incredibly attractive window to show our...catalog to our Central and Eastern European clients," he said.

In terms of parties and events, Braen revealed that participants can expect two big parties: "Simply Cocktails" on Tuesday, June 26 and "Club 21" on Wednesday, June 27. In addition to these bashes, CBS Studios International, NBCUniversal and Warner Bros. will all screen programming.

But indie exhibitors like Telemundo's Pillow may not be thrilled with this news. "Last year, a screening of major films and series that lasted the entire market kept a great percentage of buyers occupied, making them unable to attend all the meetings scheduled." Pillow added, "Hosting screening events...is a great idea if they are not presented during the traditional market days."

Many market-goers are wondering whether the event will continue to be held in Budapest. Quite a few participants expressed hope that the city would become the market's permanent home because, as Caracol's Corrente stated, "it is a very good strategy to develop a relationship between the city and the event that takes place there." Corrente believes the city and event have already developed this "connection." Studio 100's Elmendorff finds "Budapest is a wonderful venue to hold a market," and Telemundo's Pillow is "delighted with the location, city and climate." Likewise, M-Net's Rogers said, "The location is great and returning attendees know the city well." However, Power's Turney took a bit of a different view: "As long as the buyers come, the location is largely inconsequential to us."

In any case, Budapest enthusiasts can rest easy for now. "Right now we are happy in Budapest and our plan is to stay here," said Braen. "No decisions will be made until...we have an opportunity to evaluate this year from a strategic standpoint" with the new CEO.

But as Telemundo's Pillow put it, "There is nothing better than Budapest in June." ■

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Focus on Italy

(Continued from Cover)

festivals the Italian Triangle, which is similar to the Bermuda Triangle: once inside, it's difficult to escape. Indeed, it looks like Italians have decided that the month of September belongs to their multimedia industry, and are determined to keep visiting international media executives captive, at least up until the beginning of MIPCOM in Cannes on October 6.

Ignoring, for now, the drama associated with the Venice Film Festival's (VFF) competition with the Roma Cinema Fest (to be held November 9-17 just after the AFM and with its new artistic director Marco Muller, formerly with VFF), let's preview Prix Italia, which is sponsored by RAI, Italy's state broadcasting organization.

The Prix's venues will be the same as its past three editions in Turin: the RAI Production Center will host all the meetings in its Radio and Television Museum wing, while the juries will work in the nearby Radio Building.

On the television side there will be three juries, one each for documentaries, performing art and drama. This latter group will be made up of 14 members from 13 countries, including experts from Brazil, Canada and Russia.

Prix Italia's Secretary General, Giovanna Milella, pointed out that Turin was Italy's first capital and the city where RAI was originally founded. Today it still houses one of Italy's most important production centers, plus the RAI Research Center and the RAI National Symphony Orchestra.

Turin, hometown of automaker

Indeed, it looks like Italians have decided that the month of September belongs to their multimedia industry.

FIAT, has been the venue of many past Prix Italia events, starting in 1950, then again in 1972 and 1994. The Prix has been held in this city continuously since 2009 and will possibly remain until 2013.

At the Gala Concert of the opening ceremony, the RAI Orchestra, conducted by 36-year-old Slovakian maestro Juraj Valcuha, will perform at Turin's Arturo Toscanini Auditorium and broadcast live on RAI-TV5, Radio-3 and worldwide via RAI-TV International.

At the organizational level, the big news is that starting with this event, Prix Italia has been placed under the RAI World umbrella, a division of RAI that is responsible for all international-related activities, including channel distribution and marketing and, eventually, program sales in the fashion of BBC Worldwide. (For more on Prix's schedule of events, turn to the following page).

And speaking of the BBC, the last event on the September calendar, the Roma Fiction Fest (RFF), will see the venerable British broadcast organization featured during a BBC Day at the

Auditorium Parco della Musica, the event headquarters, which is not centrally located.

Renata Polverini, the governor of the Regione Lazio — the region of Rome and one of the key sponsors of the RFF — made this announcement last April

at MIP-TV during a press conference with BBC Worldwide's Tim Mutimer and RFF artistic director Steve Della Casa. Other sponsors of RFF are Italy's Association of TV Producers and Rome's Chamber of Commerce. ●



APT and BBC officials during a RFF press conference at MIP



The Venice Film Festival's red carpet



Turin will once again host Prix Italia



The Roma Fiction Fest's headquarters, the Auditorium Parco della Musica, designed by Italian architect Renzo Piano



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NBCUni Global Networks Italia's Channel Highlights

As summer heats up, NBCUniversal in Italy will be heating up Italian TV screens in July and August with a selection of titles featuring big-name stars on its four channels: E! Entertainment, which offers the most up-to-date Hollywood news; Diva Universal, an entertainment channel dedicated to fascinating women; Steel/Syfy, which airs action and comedy programming and American cinema channel Studio Universal. The channels and scheduling represent a successful model for many European channels. NBCUniversal Global Networks Italy also runs Universal Channel in Turkey and Greece.

In July on E! Entertainment (Sky platform Channel 129), viewers can catch the 18-episode seventh season of the reality show, *Keeping Up With the Kardashians*. Plus, E! Entertainment format *Behind the Scenes* will go backstage with the stars of *Snow White & The Huntsman*. Meanwhile, *E! Investigates A Family Tragedy: The Powells* will tell the true story of the murder/suicide of the Powell family.

In August, the channel is serving up *E! Special: Heroes Gone Wrong*, which investigates what happens when people violate the public trust and commit horrific crimes. *E! Bridal to Homicidal* is an hour-long special that tells the story of women who transform from happy brides to murderers. To mark the 35th anniversary of Elvis Presley's death, *E! True*

Hollywood Story: Last Days of Elvis recounts the singer's last days. In addition, *Mrs. Eastwood & Company*, about American actor Clint Eastwood's wife and daughters, will come to E! Entertainment in Italy.

Diva Universal (Sky platform Channel 128) is kicking off July with detective series *Kojak*. The channel is also premiering a number of programs dedicated to powerful women, starting with a timely episode of the original format *Great Women* called *Great Women: Special Olympic Games – Nadia Comaneci*, just in time for the 2012 Olympics. Other episodes include *Great Women: Eva Peron*, premiering in July; *Great Women: Marilyn Monroe*, premiering in August; *Great Women: Special Olympic Games – Leni Riefenstahl* (August) and *Great Women: Lady Diana* (August).

With support from the Italian Police, Diva Universal is fighting violence by dedicating a new original format, *Diva Universal Against Violence* to the theme "Police: feminine singular. In defense of women." Viewers can also tune in to Diva Universal to catch HBO documentary *Public Speaking* (August), about Fran Lebowitz.

Drama series *Grimm*, which is inspired by the classic Grimm fairy tales, and *Being Human* 4, which centers on a werewolf, a vampire and a ghost trying to live normal lives, will both make their territory premieres on Syfy (Steel – Mediaset Premium on DTT) on July 2 and will continue to air each Monday. Additionally, *The Greatest*



E! Entertainment's Mrs. Eastwood & Company

American Hero, an American comedy-drama about a man who learns to use his superhuman powers by trial and error, will debut on the channel on July 10.

Studio Universal is chock-full of exciting titles such as *Superman*; *The Evil Dead*; *Robocop*; *Jaws*; *Interceptor*; *Evita* (as a tribute to Evita Perón); *The Outsiders* and *Jerry Maguire* (to honor Tom Cruise); *Crossfire*, *Blood on the Moon*, *Cape Fear*, *The Good Guys and the Bad Guys* and *The Yakuza* (as a tribute to Robert Mitchum); *Shadows*, *Faces*, *A Woman Under the Influence* and *Opening Night* (as part of the Cassavetes Stunt), and *The Big Red One* (as part of *1 Film 1 History*), among others. ●



Steel/Syfy's Being Human 4



Studio Universal's Evita

Prix Italia 2012: Activities Schedule

The 64th edition of the RAI-sponsored international radio-television and web competition Prix Italia, directed by the Secretary General Giovanna Milella, begins in Turin on September 16 and wraps up on September 21.

Turin was the first capital of Italy, and RAI, the public Italian Radio-Television broadcasting organization, was started in Turin, which is still the headquarters of one of Italy's most important RAI production centers, the RAI Research Center and the RAI National Symphony Orchestra.

The venues for Prix Italia 2012 will remain the same as last year. The RAI Production Center, on Via Verdi 16, will host all the meetings in the Radio and Television Museum. The Radio Building, on Via Verdi 31, will house the juries.

The Opening Ceremony will feature the "Gala Concert of the RAI National Symphony Orchestra," conducted by maestro Jurai Valcuha at the Arturo Toscanini Auditorium. It will broadcast live on RAI's radio and TV channels. The festival will close with an awards ceremony at the royal palace.

This year's edition offers many "special prizes." The Special Prize: Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life, supported by the Milan Expo 2015, will provide a window of television programs devoted to themes on food and sustainable life. Another Special Prize: Cup of the President of the Italian Republic, will be awarded to a radio program by Italian President Giorgio Napolitano.

A jury of students from Turin University's School of Journalism will work in the web and multimedia sections for yet another Special Prize: Best multimedia section of newspapers, magazines and press agencies. In addition, it has been confirmed that the Special "Signis" Prize will be awarded to a competing television program that best promotes human values.

Artist Michelangelo Pistoletto has created an image that will characterize Prix Italia 2012 and serve as the leading motif of the event. The award winners will be given a piece of art created by Pistoletto for the occasion. Additionally, Pistoletto will deliver a lecture about his work on September 17 at the Castle of Rivoli.

September 19 will be dedicated to Polish director Krzysztof Zanussi, who took part in the 1969 edition of Prix Italia with one of his first works, *Face to Face*. This year, two of his major works, *The Power of Evil: Paradigme* (1985) and *Persona Non Grata* (2005), will screen at the Cinema Massimo. During the course of the evening Zanussi will speak on the subject of "European Cultural Identity in the Age of Internet."

Finally, on September 20, there will be an exhibition of U.S. visual artist and stage director Robert Wilson's celebrity portraits titled "Videoportraits At Palazzo Madama." Wilson's lecture will be followed by the screening of Katharina Otto-Bernstein's documentary, *Absolute Wilson*. ●

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Panini's TLM Has All The Ingredients for Show Biz

Last year, a “new kid” appeared on the content block in a big way: Panini Media. The “kid,” however, looked too old to be either a “kid” or “new.” Indeed, those not-too-familiar with licensing and merchandising soon discovered that the “kid” was almost 50 years old and already had an impressive program library being marketed under its label, The Licensing Machine (TLM)/Panini Media.

VideoAge asked Kent, U.K.-based TLM director, Peter J. Warsop, to finally introduce Panini’s film and TV activities to the international entertainment industry and tell us when Panini entered the film-TV content business and why.

“Panini will regularly buy franchise rights for collectables and publishing covering the whole world or perhaps for a region,” said Warsop. “As such we would sometimes find that in some countries the franchise would be too underexposed for us to launch our mass market products successfully. Faced with this scenario we had the choice of either not launching everywhere or helping to create the right level of awareness of the franchise ourselves. The latter option was one we took on our shoulders occasionally and this would often mean finding the right broadcaster to air the program around which we could build a program of activity.”

“Around seven years ago we were recognized as a company that was developing new areas and were encouraged to consider representing media and merchandise rights, particularly in Europe for some Japanese principals. To do justice to this new area of business, Panini quickly realized it would be necessary to specialize and operate through a separate division, which was immediately set up and now operates under the name of ‘The Licensing Machine’ — an agency specializing in media, merchandise and interactive rights. *Naruto* was one of the very first TV series to be represented. The popular Japanese animation series is still doing extremely well; we are now preparing to sell the ninth series.”

Warsop also explained Panini’s traditional activities. “The business has been



Signs Canadian producer Michel Zgarka and French actress Yse Brisson with Panini Media's Bruno Zarka

evolving for the last 50 years but has not, previously, strayed far beyond our principal activity of printed entertainment products,” he said. “As we see more and more interactive media opportunities, both stand-alone and those that support and promote our printed products, it is a natural progression to see Panini now involved in all areas of the multimedia world.”

Collectables, such as sticker albums, trading cards and trading card games are a favorite pastime and source of reference for both juveniles and adults all around the world and we are actively involved in over 100 territories as the global brand leader within the product category. Collectables put us in touch with millions of consumers, creating a warm and interactive association. Add to this our considerable in-depth marketing activities where we have built a close working relationship with many broadcasters and media specialists and we are feeling most comfortable within the media sector.”

Warsop then explained how Panini is structured: “The Panini Group is privately owned and its management holds the significant balance of equity. The head office is based in Modena, Italy, where many central services are provided. The main thrusts of Panini’s operations are orchestrated through a network of subsidiary companies, 100 percent owned by the group.”

“There are 13 of them situated in

most of Panini’s key markets and they perform the key disciplines of sales, marketing and distribution in their own and surrounding territories. A team of regional and area managers look after the others,” he said.

“Panini Media is a department within The Licensing Machine, the group’s licensing agency, which has the task of servicing the needs of our principals in getting their programs aired on various platforms within the multimedia world. Panini Media has offices in Modena and the U.K., and sales consultants operate out of a number of territories. Panini Media’s Sales and Acquisitions manager, Bruno Zarka, works between his French office and those in Modena (management and sales and marketing services) and the U.K. (finance and technical services).”

Warsop also explained that Panini Media’s main library is “comprehensively structured around drama TV series with four major focuses: Pop culture, with *Metal Hurlant Chronicles*; crime, with *Jordskott*; high concept drama, with *Signs* and historical costume stories, with a new series to be revealed at the upcoming MIPCOM 2012.”

“[As per] documentary drama and history formats, [they’re] structured with a partnership with Societe Europeenne de Production, one of the most recognized French producers for iconic audience leaders in primetime programs [such

Panini's Story

It all started with two brothers in Modena, Italy: Giuseppe and Benito Panini who, in 1961 created Panini, a business selling figurine cards. Soon, two other brothers, Franco and Umberto, joined the group, which became very successful selling figurines of football players.

In 1988 the brothers sold the company to the Maxwell Group. In 1992, after Robert Maxwell’s financial problems and his mysterious death, Panini was acquired by two Italian companies that, in 1994, sold the company to Marvel Entertainment for \$150 million.

Five years later, Marvel — experiencing financial problems itself — sold the company to a group that included Panini’s senior management headed by its president, Argentinean-born Aldo Hugo Sallustro (with a 75 percent ownership) and investor Vittorio Merloni (who holds the remaining 25 percent). Before joining Panini, Sallustro was an executive with one of Merloni’s companies. The deal called for Panini’s new owners to pay Marvel \$104 million, plus \$15.8 million of bank debt accumulated by Panini (the balance of \$11.2 million was paid by Marvel), thus relieving Marvel of all obligations.

Under the new ownership, Panini embarked on a series of acquisitions in the U.S. that brought an exclusive license to produce NBA (basketball) trading cards (2009); the Texas-based Donruss, which came with NFL (American football) trading cards licenses (2009) and the NHL (hockey) license (2010). Also in 2010, Panini acquired a license to create stickers for the upcoming London Olympic Games.

Panini’s 2011 revenue was 621 million euro (\$772 million).

as] *Secrets d'Histoire* and *Inside N.Y.C. Firefighters Secret Training Camp*”, said Warsop.

“Iconic animated series linked to Panini Group’s brand legacy in publishing and Manga comics [are]: the *Naruto* series and the *Simon’s Cat* series.”

As far as future plans are concerned, Warsop said that Panini Media’s immediately focusing on the “development of franchises and series in production or pre-production with additional seasons; development of drama TV series; continued expansion in the depth of our geographic presence; launching a Panini Media Family concept including a family audience drama and animated series; and integrating our actual children’s and teen library under this new umbrella with titles like *Heroes From Cozy Forest*, *The Orphans* and *The New Adventures of Poly*. ●

The screenshot shows the GEMM website with a red header bar. The header features the GEMM logo in orange and blue, and the text "GLOBAL ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA MARKET". Below the header, a banner reads "a GLOBAL ENTERTAINMENT MARKETS INC. company" and "GEMM". The main content area has a blue background with a building image. It contains text: "Imagine a media market where producers, distributors and buyers meet 365 days a year, 24/7.", "ready... ...set... {ACTION!}" with a clapperboard icon, "Welcome to GEMM GLOBAL ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA MARKET", and "A World Media Market... without packing a suitcase, stepping on a plane, or walking the floor, miles on end, booth to booth...".

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Wi-Fi OnBoard

Similar to when we see a car-window sign reading "Baby on Board," travelers have to be careful about Wi-Fi onboard airplanes. First of all we have to be wary of the cost: Over \$17 on a recent United Airlines flight from Los Angeles to New York City. The flight lasts about six hours and the average life of a laptop computer battery is less than four, and many aircrafts don't have electrical plugs. Plus, of the six hours onboard, the Wi-Fi can only be utilized for about four since the service kicks in at an altitude of 10,000 feet (3,000 meters). Under these conditions, a passenger could take advantage of the Wi-Fi service for, at the most, three hours, mainly to go over a few e-mails and check the news headlines. This means that the cost for the service is close to \$6 per hour, which is not bad if one could be charged by the time used, and not for the full fee.

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The following *My2¢* was "exhumed" from a dusty copy of *VideoAge*'s 1993 June Issue, which then was our L.A. Screenings edition. At that time, the Screenings started May 24 and ended June 10, and only the Latinas (excluding Brazil and Mexico) screened together.

While 19 years ago the Screenings took 18 days, today they take 10 days, including the portion reserved for indies. Then, *VideoAge* registered fewer than 500 buyers, versus 1,500 today. So the Screenings have evolved, but has anything actually changed? Let's find out!

This is a review of the yet-to-be released book *Great Fortunes: What Film & TV Firms Are Making Today* (Real Books Publishing Co., 20 pages) by Jim Brean, an out-of-work consultant.

The author's premise is that today's mantra seems to be "These are tough times!" While it's clear that the writer fully understands the industry, he nevertheless challenges the notion that business is getting tough.

Using data from the Veronis, Suhler and Assoc. reports, Brean compares today's business environment with the relatively easy-going times of 1989. Revenue of U.S. public filmed entertainment companies was \$12 billion in 1989. Five years later, it was estimated at \$17 billion; the return on assets for these companies was 4.5 percent. It is not unusual to see companies today with annual growth rates of 15 to 20 percent.

Quoting various studios, Brean reports that advertising TV expenditures in the world's nine key countries was \$50 billion in 1989, compared to an estimated \$70 billion in 1993. Television's share of advertising expenditures is to reach 34 percent this year, versus 33 percent in 1989. The book goes on and on charting the tremendous growth of television and its bright future.



However, Brean could have made the point without boring the reader with a sea of numbers. Suffice it to say that in 1989 just 692 companies attended MIP-TV, compared to 803 this year. During the past four years, at least 20 new TV broadcast networks and 40 cable/satellite TV services have started operating in various parts of the world. Since 1989, the number of transmitted TV hours has increased some 60 percent.

Then, abruptly, Brean pops the question: "Why are these people complaining?" In simple prose, which remains candid throughout the book (if a bit monotonous at times) Brean posits that they are complaining about pressure, not the business itself.

According to Brean, this pressure is applied mainly in four ways. *Shareholders*: "These guys want to see more bang for their buck," he writes (i.e. more dividends); therefore, managers have to worry more about saving it, than making it. *Management*: Ever since companies were taken over by bean-counters, the nit-picking is a constant factor. At this point Brean quotes Robert

J. Samuelson, who wrote in *Newsweek*: "The style of running big companies changed for the worse. The belief that all problems could be solved by analysis favored the rise of executives who were adept with numbers and making slick presentations. Huge staffs of analysts served these executives, who created conglomerates on the theory that a good manager could manage anything."

Brean also cites all those "hip" *Wall Street refugees* who are driving the former hippies (i.e. current TV executives) crazy. "Just think," writes Brean, "the only thing that has changed in one generation is a 'p-i-e': from hippie to hip!" He concludes, "Finally, they complain because of something that has been felt only recently: *Competition*. Unfortunately, this is seen as pressure rather than a challenge."

So what's your take? Has anything changed in 19 years?

Dom Serafini



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